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FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8504  
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO 1058  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1562  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 1444  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0152  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARAMARIBO 000424

SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR WHA/CAR LLUFTIG, INL, L/LEI, WHA/PD  
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD  
CARACAS FOR LEGAAT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPAO](#) [NS](#)

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF SURINAMESE PRESS COVERAGE OF ROGER KHAN  
ARREST WEEK of July 3

Ref: A) Paramaribo 415

B) Paramaribo 392

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¶1. The deportation of Roger Khan from Suriname continues to receive both front-page and electronic media coverage this week. (See reftel A and B for earlier coverage). The Times of Suriname published the results of an opinion poll conducted on July 5 by a respected Surinamese polling organization that showed broad support for Khan's deportation. The Institute of Development Oriented Studies [IDOS, an independent polling group affiliated with Suriname's sole University.] polling results indicate that 47.9 percent of Surinamese approved of the deportation of Roger Khan, while 27.3 percent believe that it would have been better for the GOS to prosecute him in Suriname; 24.7 percent registered no opinion. IDOS further found that 70 percent of the people polled believe that Khan is a criminal; with 53.8 percent responding that they understood the reason the GOS chose to deport him. A minority of 18.3 percent said they were in agreement with statements made by Khan's attorney, Mr. Erwin Kanhai, that U.S. agents kidnapped Khan. Of those sampled, 62.45 percent were of the opinion that Attorney General Subhas Punwasi had handled the matter properly in accordance with Surinamese law.

¶2. This division of opinion was roughly echoed on July 6 in an unscientific "man in the street" opinion poll in which the newspaper Dagblad Suriname canvassed 8 people randomly asking them how important it was for the GOS to keep Khan in Suriname for the sake of prosecution. Six out of 8 people approved of Khan's deportation, with one even referring to him as 'the second Bin Laden.' Of the two disagreeing with the government's action, one thought he should have been prosecuted in Suriname and the other questioned his being a true threat to Suriname's national security. These two also believed Khan should have received better treatment from the officers who took him to the airport and one of the eight (still unconvinced of the government's accounting of events) voiced his concern that Americans may have come on Surinamese soil to apprehend

him. An editorial appearing on Thursday (7/6/2006) in the daily newspaper, de Ware Tijd (DWT) strongly supported the GOS's decision. It stated, "Lady Justice is blind, but she holds a scale" wherein the editor explained that Suriname had to weigh all options and with public interest in mind the State chose to deport Khan, who posed a real threat to national security.

¶3. On Monday, Sky Radio broadcast a live 3-hour call-in talk show with the Minister of Justice and Police Chandrikapersad Santhoki in which he fielded questions from listeners reacting to news reports of Khan's capture and deportation. On Tuesday following the broadcast, the daily newspaper DWT published an editorial praising the Minister's candid remarks and said his performance should stand as a model for how others in the government should address matters of grave public concern.

¶4. DWT also published an interview with the Attorney General on Wednesday in which he revealed for the first time that he had ordered an investigation into attempts by members of Khan's criminal network to free him from custody. Mr. Punwasi said that a prison guard was offered a bribe \$ 500,000 USD to facilitate a breakout attempt. Immediately after being offered the bribe the officer notified his superiors and as a result, the authorities were able to enhance security. The AG said that his office knows who approached the prison guard and that the source of the money was from Guyanese criminal circles, but a Surinamer offered it to the guard. The investigations also revealed that these Guyanese criminals also had detailed drawings of the Santo Boma Prison where Khan was being held. The AG further explained that immediately upon learning of the attempt to free Khan plans were made to deport him. For security reasons, and realizing the extent of Guyanese involvement, it was decided not to transport Khan overland. Simply moving him around Paramaribo in a vehicle was

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difficult which led to the decision to give Khan's attorney access to him at prison rather than allow him to travel to the Court of Justice for an interview.

¶5. There is also ongoing coverage of demonstrations against Suriname and the U.S. by family and friends of Roger Khan. The De Ware Tijd noted they protested in front of the Embassies of Suriname and the United States in Georgetown, Guyana, highlighting their displeasure with the way in which Khan was handed over to American authorities. This follows earlier coverage of Khan's mother protesting in front of the Surinamese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

BARNES